



Virginia First Cities Coalition

Charlottesville
Danville
Fredericksburg
Hampton
Hopewell
Lynchburg
Martinsville
Newport News
Norfolk
Petersburg
Portsmouth
Richmond
Roanoke
Staunton
Winchester

2003 Legislative Agenda

Adopted October 19, 2002

Overarching Policies

1. Increase Virginia's financial support to the First Cities. The VFC supports restructuring the State's tax system to distribute the tax burden more equitably and raising state taxes to generate the additional funding required annually to fulfill the State's education, transportation, and human services.
2. Enhance redevelopment opportunities in the First Cities through the adoption of an urban policy and smart growth strategies.
3. Hold older, core cities harmless from any budget balancing actions because these localities are already burdened by disproportionate economic, fiscal and demographic stresses and disparities in State policies and funding.

FY 2003 Legislative Initiatives

- I. **Defensive Action: Minimize loss of state aid to localities that disproportionately affects Virginia First Cities:**
 1. **Education**
 - Retain At-Risk program funds
 - Retain reduced class size funds
 2. **Human Services**
 - CSA – maintain funding and match rate
 3. **Maintain Tax Credits, Oppose replacing with grant program**
 - Historic
 - Enterprise Zone
 - Neighborhood Assistance Act
 4. **Public Safety**
 - Preserve 599 funds
 - Juvenile Justice funds

II. Virginia First Cities will support or initiate bills or budget items that accomplish the following:

1. Education

- Upgrade standards of quality and increase state fiscal responsibility for education
- Provide state subsidy for teacher salaries in schools with high concentrations of at risk students.
- Support the PASS program

2. Transportation

- Allow cities to manage urban construction funds and projects.
- Enact changes to ensure street maintenance formula better reflects the cost of maintaining city streets.
- Increase authority of the Commissioner of Transportation to approve project changes.

3. Redevelopment/Economic Development

- Add language to comprehensive plan on housing opportunities for all income levels
- Oppose legislation overriding local zoning controls over manufactured housing.

4. Finance

- **Support legislation to increase state taxes to meet financial obligations**